

The only time Jobs can ever recall being tongue-tied was in the presence of Bob Dylan. He was playing near Palo Alto in October 2004, and Jobs was recovering from his first cancer surgery. Dylan was not a gregarious man, not a Bono or a Bowie. He was never Jobs's friend, nor did he care to be. He did, however, invite Jobs to visit him at his hotel before the concert. Jobs recalled:

We sat on the patio outside his room and talked for two hours. I was really nervous, because he was one of my heroes. And I was also afraid that he wouldn't be really smart anymore, that he'd be a caricature of himself, like happens to a lot of people. But I was delighted. He was as sharp as a tack. He was everything I'd hoped. He was really open and honest. He was just telling me about his life and about writing his songs. He said, "They just came through me, it wasn't like I was having to compose them. That doesn't happen anymore, I just can't write them that way anymore." Then he paused and said to me with his raspy voice and little smile, "But I still can sing them."

The next time Dylan played nearby, he invited Jobs to drop by his tricked-up tour bus just before the concert. When Dylan asked what his favorite song was, Jobs said "One Too Many Mornings." So Dylan sang it that night. After the concert, as Jobs was walking out the back, the tour bus came

by and screeched to a stop. The door flipped open. "So, did you hear my song I sang for you?" Dylan rasped. Then he drove off. When Jobs tells the tale, he does a pretty good impression of Dylan's voice. "He's one of my all-time heroes," Jobs recalled. "My love for him has grown over the years, it's ripened. I can't figure out how he did it when he was so young."

A few months after seeing him in concert, Jobs came up with a grandiose plan. The iTunes Store should offer a digital "boxed set" of every Dylan song ever recorded, more than seven hundred in all, for \$199. Jobs would be the curator of Dylan for the digital age. But Andy Lack of Sony, which

was Dylan's label, was in no mood to make a deal without some serious concessions regarding iTunes. In addition, Lack felt the price was too low and would cheapen Dylan. "Bob is a national treasure," said Lack, "and Steve wanted him on iTunes at a price that commoditized him." It got to the

heart of the problems that Lack and other record executives were having with Jobs: He was getting to set the price points, not them. So Lack said no.

"Okay, then I will call Dylan directly," Jobs said. But it was not the type of thing that Dylan ever dealt with, so it fell to his agent, Jeff Rosen, to sort things out.

"It's a really bad idea," Lack told Rosen, showing him the numbers. "Bob is Steve's hero. He'll sweeten the deal." Lack had both a professional and a personal desire to fend Jobs off, even to yank his chain a bit. So he made an offer to Rosen. "I will write you a check for a million dollars tomorrow if you hold off for the time being." As Lack later explained, it was an advance against future royalties, "one of those accounting things record companies do." Rosen called back forty-five minutes later and accepted. "Andy worked things out with us and asked us not to do it, which we didn't," he recalled. "I think Andy gave us some sort of an advance to hold off doing it."

By 2006, however, Lack had stepped aside as the CEO of what was by then Sony BMG, and Jobs reopened negotiations. He sent Dylan an iPod with all of his songs on it, and he showed Rosen the type of marketing campaign that Apple could mount. In August he announced a grand deal. It allowed Apple to sell the \$199 digital boxed set of all the songs Dylan ever recorded, plus the exclusive right to offer Dylan's new album, *Modern Times*, for pre-release orders. "Bob Dylan is one of the most respected poets and musicians of our time, and he is a personal hero of mine," Jobs said at the announcement. The 773-track set included forty-two rarities, such as a 1961 tape of "Wade in the Water" made in a Minnesota hotel, a 1962 version of "Handsome Molly" from a live concert at the Gaslight Café in Greenwich Village, the truly awesome rendition of "Mr. Tambourine Man" from the 1964 Newport Folk Festival (Jobs's favorite), and an acoustic version of "Outlaw Blues" from 1965.

As part of the deal, Dylan appeared in a television ad for the iPod, featuring his new album, *Modern Times*. This was one of the most astonishing cases of flipping the script since Tom Sawyer persuaded his friends to whitewash the fence. In the past, getting celebrities to do an ad required paying them a lot of money. But by 2006 the tables were turned. Major artists wanted to appear in iPod ads; the exposure would guarantee success. James Vincent had predicted this a few years earlier, when Jobs said he had contacts with many musicians and could pay them to appear in ads. "No, things are going to soon change," Vincent replied. "Apple is a different kind of brand, and it's cooler than the brand of most artists. We should talk about the opportunity we offer the bands, not pay them." Lee Clow recalled that there was actually some resistance among the younger staffers at Apple and the ad agency to using Dylan. "They wondered whether he was still cool enough," Clow said. Jobs would hear none of that. He was thrilled to have Dylan. Jobs became obsessed by every detail of the Dylan commercial. Rosen

flew to Cupertino so that they could go through the album and pick the song they wanted to use, which ended up being "Someday Baby." Jobs approved a test video that Clow made using a stand-in for Dylan, which was then shot in Nashville with Dylan himself. But when it came back, Jobs hated it. It wasn't distinctive enough. He wanted a new style. So Clow

hired another director, and Rosen was able to convince Dylan to retape the entire commercial. This time it was done with a gently backlit cowboyhatted

Dylan sitting on a stool, strumming and singing, while a hip woman in a newsboy cap dances with her iPod. Jobs loved it.

The ad showed the halo effect of the iPod's marketing: It helped Dylan win a younger audience, just as the iPod had done for Apple computers. Because of the ad, Dylan's album was number one on the Billboard chart its first week, topping hot-selling albums by Christina Aguilera and Outkast. It was the first time Dylan had reached the top spot since *Desire* in 1976, thirty years earlier. *Ad Age* headlined Apple's role in propelling Dylan. "The iTunes spot wasn't just a run-of-the-mill celebrity-endorsement deal in which a big brand signs a big check to tap into the equity of a big star," it reported. "This one flipped the formula, with the all-powerful Apple brand giving Mr. Dylan access to younger demographics and helping propel his sales to places they hadn't been since the Ford administration."

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In addition to their interest in computers, they shared a passion for music. "It was an incredible time for music," Jobs recalled. "It was like living at a time when Beethoven and Mozart were alive. Really. People will look back on it that way. And Woz and I were deeply into it." In particular,

Wozniak turned Jobs on to the glories of Bob Dylan. "We tracked down this guy in Santa Cruz who put out this newsletter on Dylan," Jobs said. "Dylan taped all of his concerts, and some of the people around him were not scrupulous, because soon there were tapes all around. Bootlegs of everything. And this guy had them all." Hunting down Dylan tapes soon became a joint venture. "The two of us would go tramping through San Jose and Berkeley and ask about Dylan bootlegs and collect them," said Wozniak. "We'd buy brochures of Dylan lyrics and stay up late interpreting them. Dylan's words struck chords of creative thinking." Added Jobs, "I had more than a hundred hours, including every concert on the '65 and '66 tour," the one where Dylan went electric. Both of them bought high-end TEAC reel-to-reel tape decks. "I would use mine at a low speed to record many concerts on one tape," said Wozniak. Jobs matched

his obsession: "Instead of big speakers I bought a pair of awesome headphones and would just lie in my bed and listen to that stuff for hours."

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Even more brazenly, he said she would have to drive part of the way, even though she didn't know how to use the stick shift. "Once we got on the open road, he made me get behind the wheel, and he shifted the car until we got up to 55 miles per hour," she recalled. "Then he puts on a tape of Dylan's *Blood on the Tracks*, lays his head in my lap, and goes to sleep. He had the attitude that he could do anything, and therefore so can you. He put his life in my hands. So that made me do something I didn't think I could do."

It was the brighter side of what would become known as his reality distortion field. "If you trust him, you can do things," Holmes said. "If he's decided that something should happen, then he's just going to make it happen."

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As chairman of the company, Jobs went onstage first to start the shareholders' meeting. He did so with his own form of an invocation. "I'd like to open the meeting," he said, "with a twenty-year-old poem by Dylan—that's Bob Dylan." He broke into a little smile, then looked down to read from the second verse of "The Times They Are a-Changin'." His voice was high-pitched as he raced through the ten lines, ending with "For the loser now/ Will be later to win / For the times they are a-changin'." That song was the anthem that kept the multimillionaire board chairman in touch with his counterculture self-image. He had a bootleg copy of his favorite version, which was from the live concert Dylan performed, with Joan Baez, on Halloween 1964 at Lincoln Center's Philharmonic Hall.

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Turning thirty is a milestone for most people, especially those of the generation that proclaimed it would never trust anyone over that age. To celebrate his own thirtieth, in February 1985, Jobs threw a lavishly formal but also playful—black tie and tennis shoes—party for one thousand in the

ballroom of the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. The invitation read, "There's an old Hindu saying that goes, 'In the first 30 years of your life, you

make your habits. For the last 30 years of your life, your habits make you.' Come help me celebrate mine."

One table featured software moguls, including Bill Gates and Mitch Kapor. Another had old friends such as Elizabeth Holmes, who brought as her

date a woman dressed in a tuxedo. Andy Hertzfeld and Burrell Smith had rented tuxes and wore floppy tennis shoes, which made it all the more memorable when they danced to the Strauss waltzes played by the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.

Ella Fitzgerald provided the entertainment, as Bob Dylan had declined.

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Earlier that week, Dylan had released a new album, *Empire Burlesque*, and Hertzfeld brought a copy that they played on Jobs's high-tech turntable. The most notable track, "When the Night Comes Falling from the Sky," with its apocalyptic message, seemed appropriate for the evening, but Jobs didn't like it. It sounded almost disco, and he gloomily argued that Dylan had been going downhill since *Blood on the Tracks*. So Hertzfeld moved the needle to the last song on the album, "Dark Eyes," which was a simple acoustic number featuring Dylan alone on guitar and harmonica. It was slow and mournful and, Hertzfeld hoped, would remind Jobs of the earlier Dylan tracks he so loved. But Jobs didn't like that song either and had no desire to hear the rest of the album.

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In 1982, when he was still working on the Macintosh, Jobs met the famed folksinger Joan Baez through her sister Mimi Fariña, who headed a charity that was trying to get donations of computers for prisons. A few weeks later he and Baez had lunch in Cupertino. "I wasn't expecting a lot, but

she was really smart and funny," he recalled. At the time, he was nearing the end of his relationship with Barbara Jasinski. They had vacationed in Hawaii, shared a house in the Santa Cruz mountains, and even gone to one of Baez's concerts together. As his relationship with Jasinski flamed out, Jobs began getting more serious with Baez. He was twenty-seven and Baez was forty-one, but for a few years they had a romance. "It

turned into a serious relationship between two accidental friends who became lovers,” Jobs recalled in a somewhat wistful tone. Elizabeth Holmes, Jobs’s friend from Reed College, believed that one of the reasons he went out with Baez—other than the fact that she was beautiful and funny and talented—was that she had once been the lover of Bob Dylan. “Steve loved that connection to Dylan,” she later said. Baez and Dylan had been lovers in the early 1960s, and they toured as friends after that, including with the Rolling Thunder Revue in 1975. (Jobs had the bootlegs of those concerts.)

When she met Jobs, Baez had a fourteen-year-old son, Gabriel, from her marriage to the antiwar activist David Harris. At lunch she told Jobs she was trying to teach Gabe how to type. “You mean on a typewriter?” Jobs asked. When she said yes, he replied, “But a typewriter is antiquated.” “If a typewriter is antiquated, what does that make me?” she asked. There was an awkward pause. As Baez later told me, “As soon as I said it, I realized the answer was so obvious. The question just hung in the air. I was just horrified.”

Much to the astonishment of the Macintosh team, Jobs burst into the office one day with Baez and showed her the prototype of the Macintosh. They were dumbfounded that he would reveal the computer to an outsider, given his obsession with secrecy, but they were even more blown away to be in the presence of Joan Baez. He gave Gabe an Apple II, and he later gave Baez a Macintosh. On visits Jobs would show off the features he liked. “He was sweet and patient, but he was so advanced in his knowledge that he had trouble teaching me,” she recalled.

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Jobs would confide in Debi Coleman and Joanna Hoffman about his relationship with Baez and worry about whether he could marry someone who had a teenage son and was probably past the point of wanting to have more children. “At times he would belittle her as being an ‘issues’ singer and not a true ‘political’ singer like Dylan,” said Hoffman. “She was a strong woman, and he wanted to show he was in control. Plus, he always said he wanted to have a family, and with her he knew that he wouldn’t.”

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“Simply handing over your iPod to a friend, your blind date, or the total stranger sitting next to you on the plane opens you up like a book,” Steven Levy wrote in *The Perfect Thing*. “All somebody needs to do is scroll through your library on that click wheel, and, musically speaking, you’re naked. It’s not just what you like—it’s who you are.” So one day, when we were sitting in his living room listening to music, I asked Jobs to let me see his. As we sat there, he flicked through his favorite songs. Not surprisingly, there were all six volumes of Dylan’s bootleg series, including the tracks Jobs had first started worshipping when he and Wozniak were able to score them on reel-to-reel tapes years before the series was officially released. In addition, there were fifteen other Dylan albums, starting with his first, *Bob Dylan* (1962), but going only up to *Oh Mercy* (1989). Jobs had spent a lot of time arguing with Andy Hertzfeld and others that Dylan’s subsequent albums, indeed any of his albums after *Blood on the Tracks* (1975), were not as powerful as his early performances. The one exception he made was Dylan’s track “Things Have Changed” from the 2000 movie *Wonder Boys*. Notably his iPod did not include *Empire Burlesque* (1985), the album that Hertzfeld had brought him the weekend he was ousted from Apple.

The show Steve Jobs saw Dylan play -
<http://www.bobdylan.com/tour/2008-09-09-private-show>

(in the book Isaacson says October 2004. I wonder if this was purposely said, to disincline people from connecting it to any future cancer battles/illnesses Jobs struggled with. Otherwise, simply an error.